

Montague Economic Development and
Industrial Corporation

Economic Development Plan



DRAFT- Nov 2021

Montague Economic Development and Industrial Corporation (EDIC)

EDIC Board of Directors:

Richard Ruth, Chair
Linda Ackerman, Treasurer
John Furbish
Ella Ingraham
James Mussoni

Prepared with support from the Montague Planning and Conservation Department
Walter Ramsey, AICP
Town Planner/ EDIC Coordinator

The Plan was presented by the EDIC to the Montague Planning Board on 11/23/2021 following the opportunity for public comment at a public hearing.

The Plan was endorsed by the Planning Board on 11/23/2021 and approved by Town Meeting on XXXXX.

Economic Development Contacts

Town of Montague Town Planner/ EDIC Coordinator

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Town Administrator

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Plan Overview.....	4
Montague Quick Stats.....	6
Project Areas locus Map.....	12
<u>Project Areas</u>	
Airport Industrial Park.....	13
Turnpike Road Industrial Park.....	15
Turners Falls Canal District.....	18
Great Falls Discovery Center Area.....	20
Farren Care Center.....	23
Report of the Planning Board.....	24
Town Meeting Adoption.....	25

Appendices

A: Economic Profile



MONTAGUE EDIC ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Vision Statement

Montague EDIC's vision is to facilitate Montague's transition from its origins as "planned industrial community" to a "planned industrious community" that provides a climate for both business and community growth. Montague will have an abundance of gainful employment opportunities, a high quality of life, access to culture and education, a healthy environment and a sustainable future. We believe that Montague's industrial heritage, distinctive architecture and creative and hard-working residents are the foundation for a successful economy. The EDIC interprets industrial activity to include both job creation and retention activities as well as the housing and technological infrastructure to support those workers. Industry in Montague includes agriculture, renewable energy, maker spaces, people working from home, and traditional industries that produce and distribute manufactured products.

In Montague businesses and residents will benefit from a pipeline of development sites for growth that are well planned and consistent with community's vision for itself. These sites range from fully serviced industrial park lots, remediated brownfield sites, adaptively re-used mills, and village infill lots. The Montague EDIC is not only a tool, but a voice for economic development in Montague.

About the Montague EDIC and Plan

In 1984, the Montague Economic Development and Industrial Corporation (EDIC) was certified by the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development, in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 121C. An EDIC is a corporation established by a municipality in order to implement economic development projects. The EDIC has the powers and duties imposed by Chapter 121C to undertake and carry out the economic projects covered by this plan. These powers include the ability to purchase, sell, and manage property and the ability to receive local, state and federal grants, among others.

When Montague EDIC was established in 1984, a plan was prepared to guide economic development and industrial activities in Montague. That plan was updated in 1999 and 2015. In the 37 years since EDIC was established the Town has seen two very successful economic development projects come to fruition. The Great Falls Discovery Center/ Canalside Rail Trail, a major tourist destination in Montague, has been developed to near completion. Also the Airport Industrial Park, a regional employment center is virtually built-out to capacity.

Economic and industrial development activities in Montague have been examined and five project areas have been identified as priorities in this plan. Priorities for these economic development projects have been developed based upon previously stated goals and recent input from the EDIC, Montague Comprehensive Plan, Downtown Turners Falls Livability Plan, Turnpike Road Energy Industrial Park Master Plan, Franklin County Community Economic Development Strategy and the Regional Plan for Sustainable Development, each of which involved broad-based community participation.

Boundaries of the Area

Because limitations in the enabling legislation, the EDIC is only authorized to plan for economic development projects in areas currently zoned to allow for industrial uses. Montague has two Industrial Zoning Districts: “Industrial” and “Historic Industrial”, although certain industrial uses are allowed in other zoning districts such as “General Business, Central Business, Rural Business, and Agriculture-Forestry”. While the EDIC has this limitation, other municipal, non-profit and regional economic development agencies and offices are strongly encouraged to plan for economic and industrial development in parts of the community outside the purview of EDIC.

Statement of Need

Montague is one the most economically distressed communities in the most rural counties in the Commonwealth. A steady erosion of traditional manufacturing has left the town saddled with a backlog of aging infrastructure and major brownfield redevelopment challenges. These barriers to progress are exacerbated by a lack of capital compared to the rest of the state. As a result, Montague’s modest housing growth over the last twenty years has been less than the county and state average. Montague’s population is stagnant. The town has gained only 50 people over the previous 40 years and the population is projected to be flat through 2030, however the age makeup is changing dramatically. Youth and child bearing population is in steep decline and by 2030, the percentage of seniors aged 65+ will double to over 30% of the population. Meanwhile there are at least 6 bridges currently closed in Montague due to structural disrepair and our Sewer Plant is under EPA orders to rehabilitate and modernize Montague’s sewer plant.

Despite these challenges, Montague is a community that has a growth mindset. Montague has a comparatively high percentage of artists, telecommuters, and healthcare workers, in addition to a stable manufacturing base. Montague EDIC wants to attract industry and residents that will stabilize our villages and provide the services that people have come to expect, however strategic investment from the State will be needed to create a climate for stable housing and economic growth.

The 2020-2025 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for Franklin County recognizes the lack of developable or ready to use industrial space as one of the weaknesses for economic development in the county. The CEDS Plan has two relevant objectives that are advanced in this plan:

- 1) Support the redevelopment of brownfield properties through assessment, remediation and site preparation.
- 2) Increase the amount of planned industrial/business park land available, and encourage its development applying smart growth principles.

Montague Economic Development Profile

Villages

Turners Falls
Millers Falls
Montague Center
Montague City
Lake Pleasant

Population

Total Population (2020) 8,500
% change from 2010: +1.7

Labor Force

2019 4,453
Unemployment Rate 5.1% (4.8% in MA)

Market Access

Interstate 91 exit 27. State Routes 2, 63, 47

Distance to major cities

Boston.....90 miles
Worcester.....70 miles
New York.....181 miles
Northampton, MA...25 miles

Airports

Turners Falls Municipal
Bradley International
Worcester Regional
Logan International

Railroads

New England Central, PanAM

Utilities and Services

Electric- Western Mass Electric
Water- Turners Falls Water Department
Natural Gas- Berkshire
Sewerage- Water Pollution Control Facility
Communications- Verizon, Comcast

Key Industry Clusters in Montague

Health Care and Social Assistance
Ag, Forestry, Nat Resource Based
Education Services
Food Product Manufacturing
Precision Manufacturing

Government

Representative Town Meeting
Board of Selectmen
Town Administrator
Planning and Conservation Department
Turners Falls Fire District, Montague Center FD

Education

Primary and Secondary

Gill-Montague School District
Franklin County Tech (in Industrial Park)
Northfield Mount Hermon (Gill)
Deerfield Academy (Deerfield)

Colleges & Universities

Five College Consortium in Amherst/Northampton
Greenfield Community College
Thomas Aquinas College (Northfield)

Taxes (FY 2021)

Split Tax Rate R-\$17.44 C-\$26.99
Turners Falls Fire District- R-\$2.67 C \$4.20
Montague Center Fire District- \$1.23
Average Single Family Tax Bill \$3,772
Industrial Valuation \$167,258,261
Total Valuation \$956,359,089

Wages

Median Household Income (2019 ACS) \$54,430

Largest Employers

Judd Wire Inc.
Lightlife Foods Inc.
Franklin County Tech School
Gil-Montague School District
Red Fire Farm
Hillside Plastics, Inc.

Recreation/Culture

Canalside Bike Path/ Franklin County Bikeway
Great Falls Discovery Center
Montague Book Mill
Shea Theater

Thomas Memorial Golf Course
River Access for boating, camping, canoeing, fishing
Events: Great Falls Festival, Cider Days, Pocumtuck
Homelands Festival

Municipal Management and Economic Development Capacity

- **Town Administrator** who oversees all municipal departments and is responsible for economic development in Montague.
- **Department of Planning and Conservation** that advances and manages specific community development initiatives identified in municipal plans. The Department routinely oversees major public works projects that enhance the climate for private investment as well as property development projects. The Planning Department also facilitates the permitting process for industrial and commercial development.
- Town meeting established a **EDIC coordinator** position in 2021 which allows the Town Planner to oversee economic development initiatives of and adjacent to the Montague EDIC, in accordance with this plan.
- The Town has a long established **RiverCulture Program** that is dedicated to advancing community development through arts, culture, and place-making- which makes Montague a place where people want to live and do business.
- **TIF review committee** made up of relevant town and Fire District officials to ensure an efficient application process.
- Montague has a strong reputation for **cross-collaboration** among regional and district and state partner agencies

EDIC Board of Directors:

Name	Affiliation	Title	EDIC Membership Compliance
Richard Ruth	Zoning Board of Appeals member, general contractor	Chair	Industrial Development
Linda Ackerman	Turners Falls Branch Manager Greenfield Savings Bank	Treasurer	Financial Matters
Ella Ingraham	Former Tax Collector		Municipal experience
James Mussoni		Member	Member at Large
John Furbish	resident	Member	Representative of low to moderate income population
Vacancy			Real Estate Matters
Vacancy			Member at large

Members are appointed to 3 year terms by the Montague Selectboard

The EDIC's Coordinator is Walter Ramsey, Montague's Town Planner. He is accredited with the American Institute of Certified Planners.

Montague's Advantage

Montague has established itself as a destination community in the Pioneer Valley. Montague boasts well defined villages, pristine open spaces, and an attractive downtown Turners Falls with riverfront recreation. These assets combined with affordable real estate and proximity to Amherst and Northampton are providing a framework for success. Montague enjoys an arts scene, a robust industrial park, and a steady stream of new residents.

- Access to a highly educated population due to proximity to UMass , 5-College Area, and numerous preparatory schools such as Deerfield Academy, Northfield Mount Hermon.
- High quality of life, low cost of living.
- Strong industrial base at nearby Airport Industrial Park in Turners Falls and in neighboring Greenfield.
- Robust outdoor recreation assets and natural resources: Birding on the Montague Sandplains, Biking the Canalside Rail Trail, Unity Park on the Connecticut Riverfront, Great Falls Discovery Center
- Proactive and creative economic and cultural development team on staff
- Rising median household income (\$54,430)
- A “Green Economy” bolstered by a renewable energy industry. The town largest taxpayer is a 68MW Hydroelectric generation facility and the town has over 20MW of commercial scale solar that generate substantial revenues for the municipality.

Montague Business Incentives

Economic Opportunity Areas

Montague has 5 Economic Opportunity Areas (EOA) that have been certified by the Massachusetts Economic Assistance Coordinating Council under the Mass. Economic Development Incentive Program

<u>EOA</u>	<u>Date Designated</u>
Downtown Turners Falls	4/12/2018
Village Center Millers Falls	4/12/2018
Montague City	4/12/2018
Airport Industrial Park	4/12/2018
Sandy Lane Industrial Area	4/12/2018

Under the Massachusetts Economic Development Incentive Program, an Economic Opportunity Area is an area designated by a municipality that identifies a particular need and priority for economic development. The area must meet the State definition for an area that is blighted, decadent, or substandard. The areas have been designated for a period of 20 years.

State and Local Tax Incentives Available

State Investment Tax Credit (Economic Opportunity Area Credit) – Between 1-10% investment tax credit on State income taxes towards all tangible depreciable investments associated with the project (includes qualifying personal and tangible property that is acquired, constructed, reconstructed or erected, has a useful life of four years or more, and is either owned or secured through an operating lease). This increases the state investment tax credit for manufacturers from 3% to up to 10% at the discretion of the State. Certified projects that are not manufacturers may take advantage of the tax credit.

10% Abandoned Building Tax Deduction – Allows for a 10% State income tax deduction for all costs associated with renovating an abandoned building for commercial use. An abandoned building is defined as a building located within an Economic Opportunity Area that has been at least 75% vacant for at least the previous two years. The building must be designated abandoned by the Economic Assistance Coordinating Council. The renovation deduction may be taken in addition to any other deduction for which the renovation costs qualify, e.g., the depreciation deduction on improvements to property. This deduction is available for personal income taxpayers or for corporations with tax liability determined by net income.

Municipal Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Exemption – A percentage exemption on the increased value of a parcel resulting from an expansion or improvement. Exemptions can be from 0% to 100% of the increased value for a period of between 5 and 20 years. The base value before improvements is taxed at the full assessed value. TIF agreements are negotiated between the Town and the Certified Project candidate.

Federal Opportunity Zone

The Turners Falls Census Tract (25011040701) has been nominated to the U.S. Treasury by the Massachusetts Governor's Office for designation as a Federal Opportunity Zone. This program was created as part of the federal Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017. The Opportunity Zone program provides a federal tax incentive for taxpayers who reinvest unrealized capital gains into 'Opportunity Funds,' which are specialized vehicles dedicated to investing in low-income areas called 'Opportunity Zones.'

Historic Tax Credits

Montague has 2 National Register Historic Districts and one pending district

- Downtown Turners Falls
- Montague Center
- Millers Falls (nomination pending)

Buildings listed in these districts that are proposed for historic rehabilitation are eligible for State and Federal Historic Tax credits.

Accomplishments since the 2014 Plan

- Fiber internet was expanded into the Airport Industrial Park
- Ja'Duke constructed a 500 seat theater and expanded their educational offerings in the Airport Industrial Park. An adjacent 3 acre lot was purchased from the EDIC to accommodate the expansion.
- Atlantic Golf and Turf/ Field Services, a long time occupant of the Airport Industrial Park expanded into the former Hallmark School and subsequently constructed a 14,000 square foot expansion in 2019.
- 253 Organic rehabilitated the former Hallmark Imaging Lab at 253 Millers Falls Road into a successful cannabis cultivation and retail facility.
- Major expansions were constructed at Charter NEX, Hillside Plastics, and Lightlife/Greenleaf Foods over the last 5 years.
- Downtown Streetscape Revitalization. The Town focused 4 Community Development Block Grants between 2013- present to upgrade the streetscape in downtown Turners Falls which has unlocked private investment funds in key downtown properties and help facilitate downtown revitalization. Private redevelopment of several downtown mixed use buildings followed the public investment
- Shea Theater was revitalized under new management starting in 2017. It has become an anchor for downtown activity. As a result, Turners Falls achieved designation as a Cultural District in 2018.
- The Town has made progress in economic development capacity. The Town hired Cultural Coordinator in 2019 and created a EDIC Coordinator stipend position in 2020
- The town has Developed a 8MW Solar Facility on and around the former landfill at Sandy Lane. It has helped prepare that area for development while serving as a source of revenue for the town.
- The Turners Falls Municipal Airport has implemented major facility improvements under new management and an expansion is planned.

Setbacks since the 2014 Plan

- The Farren Care Center announced closure in 2021. It was the largest employer and adaptive reuse of the 7 acre property will present a challenge.
- The Hallmark School of Photography closed in 2016 due to financial difficulties. Aside from the loss of students, several properties in the Industrial Park, but all were adaptively reused within 3 years.
- Southworth Paper Company, the last remaining paper mill in Turners Falls closed abruptly in 2017. The property was sold to a new developer in 2019 and planned to be converted into a cannabis cultivation facility
- The list of closed or restricted bridges has grown to include the following : North Leverett Road, South Street, Central Street, Chestnut Loop, Sixth Street, 5th Street Pedestrian

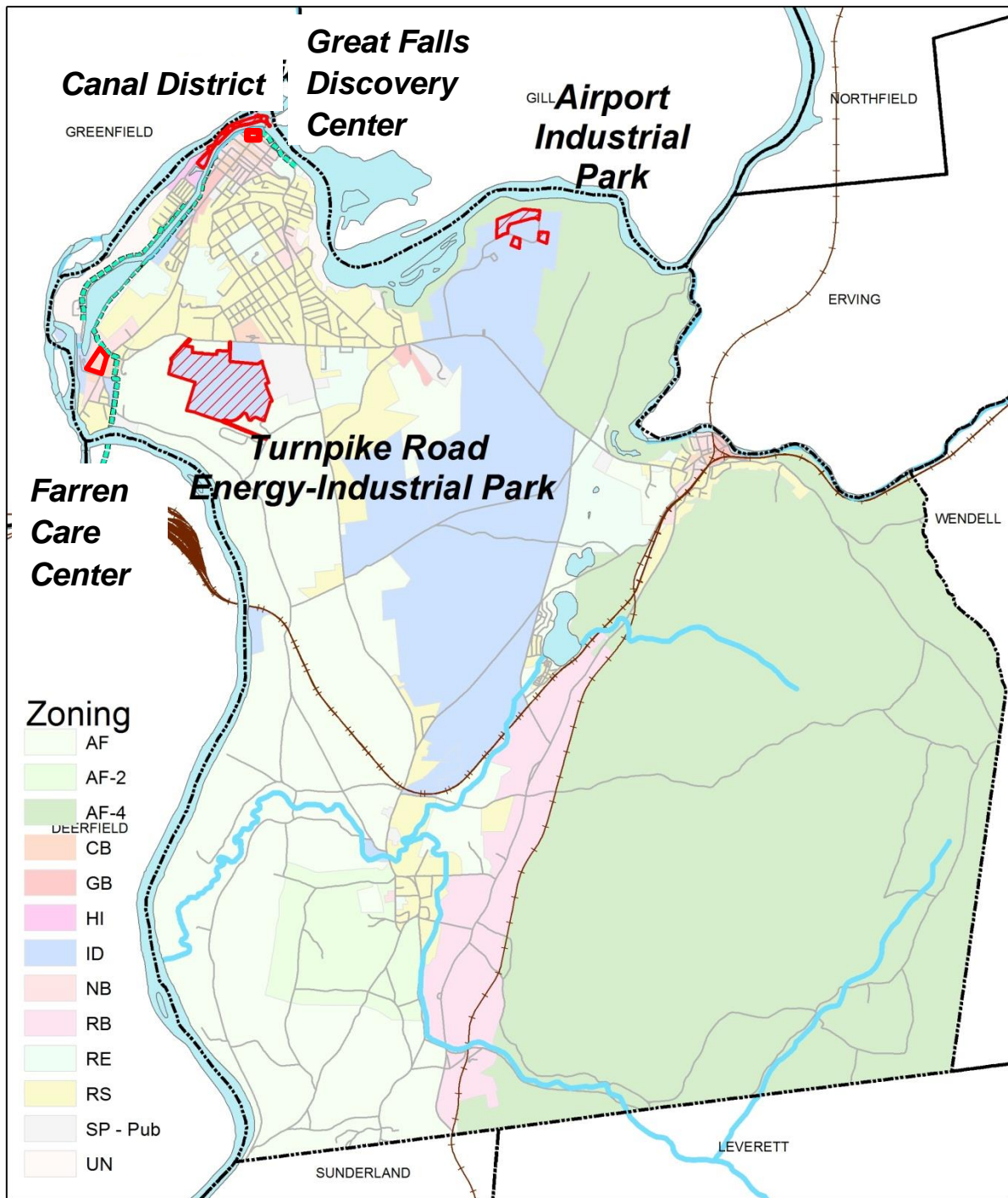
MONTAGUE EDIC PLANNING AREAS

- **Airport Industrial Park**
- **Sandy Lane Industrial Area**
- **Historic-Industrial Canal District**
- **Great Falls Discovery Center**
- **Farren Care Center Area**

The EDIC will work cooperatively with representatives of the private and public sectors to encourage, foster, promote, coordinate and/or support redevelopment of the of the above-named areas. In some cases, the EDIC may acquire a property in order to facilitate property redevelopment.

Regardless of whether or not the EDIC will acquire the properties listed here for redevelopment to be managed by the EDIC, the EDIC will support economic development projects that will be conducted in compliance with:

- This Economic Development Plan;
- All local plans such as the community's Master Plan (1999), Downtown Turners Falls Livability Plan (2013), Open Space and Recreation Plan (2018), and other plans as they may be relevant;
- Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) and;
- All local zoning, subdivision rules and regulations and other local development requirements.



Montague Economic Development and Industrial Corporation 2021 Economic Development Plan

0 2,500 5,000
Feet



AIRPORT INDUSTRIAL PARK

Montague Zoning District: Industrial

Project Description and History:

The Airport industrial park (AIP) was first constructed in the 1960s and expanded in 1990s. The park is a planned municipal development. The 15 firms in the AIP employ a total of 512 employees. There are over 623,565 sq. ft. of industrial development built on 97 acres of land. There are currently only 7 acres of municipal land left for development on 2 small parcels. There is no capacity for a new large tenant at the park. At least 5 businesses have expanded in the park in the last 7 years, which indicates that businesses choose wisely to locate and grow in Montague.

Recent Developments in the AIP

2017- Fiber Broadband expanded into Park
2018- Atlantic Golf and Turf expands into former Hallmark School
2018- Charter NEX expands, adds new machinery
2019- 253 Organic redevelops the long vacant Hallmark Imaging Lab
2020- EDIC sold Lot 17- 15 to allow Ja'Duke Performing Arts to constructs new 500 Seat Theater
2020/21- New Airport Industrial Park gateway and directory signage
2021- Turners Falls Airport proposes to purchase of Pioneer Aviation Site to expand the services and viability of the Turners Falls Airport.
2021- Flower Power Growers purchased and started to develop lot 58 into a 100,000 sqft cultivation facility.



Project Goals:

- To maintain the Airport Industrial Park as one of the primary employment centers in Franklin County
- To capitalize on the Airport as an asset to economic development

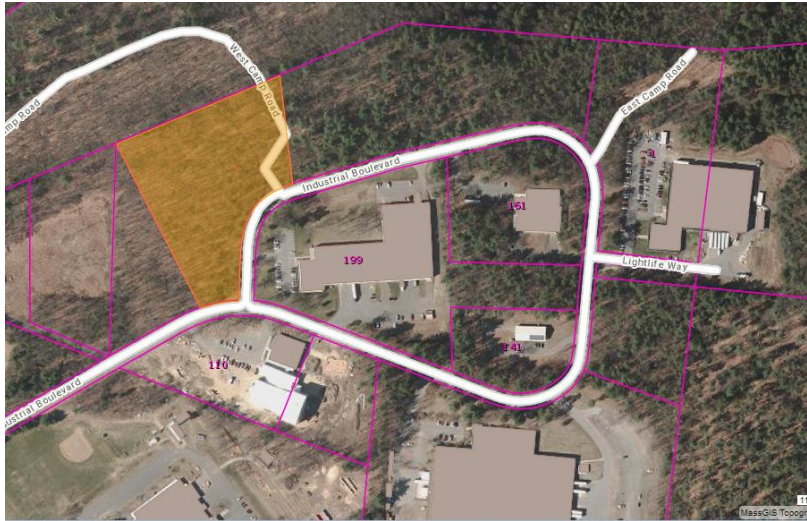
Action Items:

- Market and develop remaining industrial lots on Industrial Boulevard (Lots 13A and C)
- Enforce Industrial Park Covenants for current and new development
- Work with land use boards, Selectboard, and TIF committee to support expansion of existing businesses in the Park.

Airport Industrial Park

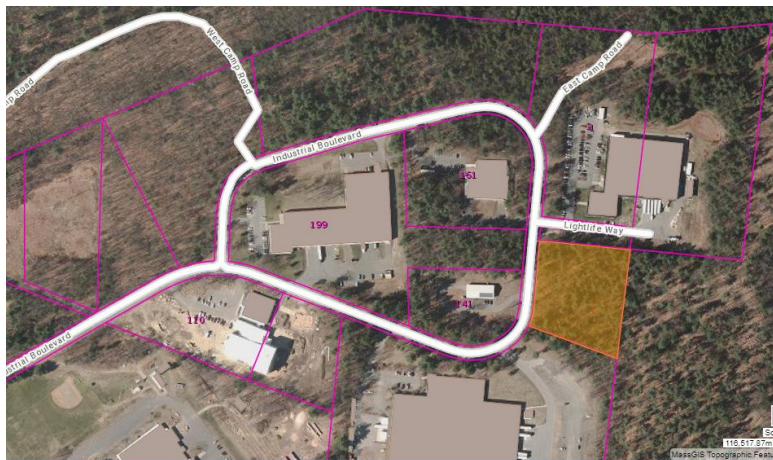
Parcels to be conveyed for Development

Industrial Boulevard Lot 13A - Assessors Map 17 Lot 13A



- Development-ready lot in the Airport Industrial Park
- Water, Sewer, cable hookups at the curb
- 3.5 buildable acres on a 5.18 acre lot, Zoned Industrial
- Owned by Town of Montague with EDIC authority to sell

Industrial Boulevard Lot 13C - Assessors Map 17 Lot 13C



- Development-ready lot in the Airport Industrial Park
- Water, Sewer, cable hookups at the curb
- 2.3 acre lot ,Zoned Industrial
- Owned by Town of Montague with EDIC authority to sell

SANDY LANE INDUSTRIAL AREA

Montague Zoning District: Industrial
Land Ownership: Town of Montague

The Sandy Lane Industrial Park is a planned municipal industrial park on 163 acres off Turnpike Road in Turners Falls, MA. It is a repurposed municipal landfill with a combination of light manufacturing, municipal uses, an 8.8 MW solar development, a planned transportation maintenance facility, and open space. The Town of Montague takes pride in its manufacturing and renewable energy tradition, and the Sandy Lane Industrial Park is the 21st century embodiment of that heritage. Park assets include:

- Municipal water and sewer, 3-Phase Power, Well drained soils
- 43D Priority Development Site (expedited permitting) and Economic Opportunity Area
- Pre-development planning complete for park
- 7 Minutes to Route 2, 10 Minutes to 1-91
- Roadway + infrastructure improvements planned for 2022
- Long-established manufacturer Judd Wire, Inc anchors the park
- Cooperative local government supports responsible development

Project Goals:

-Increase the supply of industrial space and high quality employment opportunities in Montague
-Develop low-impact industrial development on the back 18 acre lot in a manner consistent with the nearby neighborhoods and on-site municipal uses. The lot should be developed to retain an expanding business or enhance an important market cluster for the region.

Action Items:

- Sell map 21 Lot 50 (1.27 acres) to Judd Wire for parking expansion
-Ensure proper relocation/consolidation Highway Department uses at the site.
-attract light-industrial tenants to develop the 18 acre area behind the transfer station.
-work with other town entities to support the protection and recreation potential of open space in the Sandy Lane Industrial Area.

Development Opportunity

15-18 developable acres off the end of Sandy Lane that can accommodate a light manufacturing facility of up to 100,000 square feet in floor area. This is the final development opportunity in the park. This area is the only opportunity for large scale development in town.

Planned Investments at Sandy Lane

2021– Burn Dump landfill capped to DEP standards. Kearsarge’s Middle solar array goes live
2022- Franklin Regional Transit Authority to complete construction of regional bus maintenance facility
2022– Sandy Lane to receive full depth reconstruction and utility extensions
2023? Consolidation of municipal transfer station facilities

Financing:

Private investment, MassDevelopment, MassWorks Infrastructure program, Town of Montague, US Economic Development Administration



Sandy Lane Development Opportunity (left) Burn Dump solar (right)



Conceptual Master Plan of Sandy Lane Industrial Area

Turnpike Road Industrial Area

Parcels to be acquired from the Town and conveyed for Development

The Montague EDIC intends to acquire Sandy Lane Lot 150 and the proposed 18 acre development lot from the Town of Montague in effort to facilitate the sale of these properties for Industrial Development. Lot 150 It will enable Judd Wire (the town's largest employer) to control its primary parking lot for employees and enable orderly development of lot 149 (FRTA maintenance facility). The 18 acre development lot, once subdivided, will be marketed to a single industrial tenant. This is the only developable parcel for an industrial building of up to 100,000 square feet in Montague.

Sandy Lane Lot 150 - Assessors Map 21 Lot 150



- Existing Parking area currently leased to adjacent Judd Wire
- 1.27 acre lot
- Zoned Industrial
- Owned by Town of Montague with EDIC authority to sell

Proposed 18 acre Development Lot (shown in yellow)-



- Potential development Lot (to be subdivided from Map 21 Lot 6)
- 15-18 acre lot
- Zoned Industrial
- Owned by Town of Montague with EDIC authority to sell
- Well drained soils, flat land
- 43D priority development site

CANAL DISTRICT REVITALIZATION

Montague Zoning District: Historic Industrial

The Turners Falls Canal District is defined by the mill complexes along the Turners Falls Power Canal. The area has a wide range of access, environmental, and layout challenges that prevent these current and former mill sites from being redeveloped through the normal efforts of private enterprise.

Three of the five former mill sites are vacant and blighted. The area is characteristically challenged by a lack of access to the mill sites because the Power Canal and Connecticut River are considerable physical barriers. The bridges across the canal are in various states of disrepair, but significant improvements are planned that will enable private investment. The Town has adopted zoning to allow for flexible and adaptive reuse of the mill complexes. The Downtown Turners Falls Livability Plan highlights this particular area for redevelopment potential. Vacant or underutilized parcels opposite the canal may be used to support reuse of the mills.

EDIC can work to redevelop these parcels in support of new industrial and mixed use, thereby reducing blight and increasing the tax base in Montague. The Town and EDIC must carefully think through their roles in any public or private redevelopment scenarios.

Project Goals:

- Promote adaptive and/ or productive re-use of the former mill sites
- Improve the physical condition of historic-industrial buildings
- Remove barriers to private development including the remediation of environmental problems at these industrial sites and solving infrastructure/access issues.

Action Items:

- Identify end use and transfer municipal ownership of Strathmore Mill (20 Canal Rd) to a responsible developer.
- Redevelop 11-15 Power Street/ Griswold Mill for housing and mixed use.
- Develop river access and recreation at 8 Canal Road
- Restore or improve bridges across the canal including 5th Street Bridge, Strathmore Mill pedestrian bridge, IP bridge, and Power Street Bridge.
- Restore utility connections to the historic mill sites

Financing:

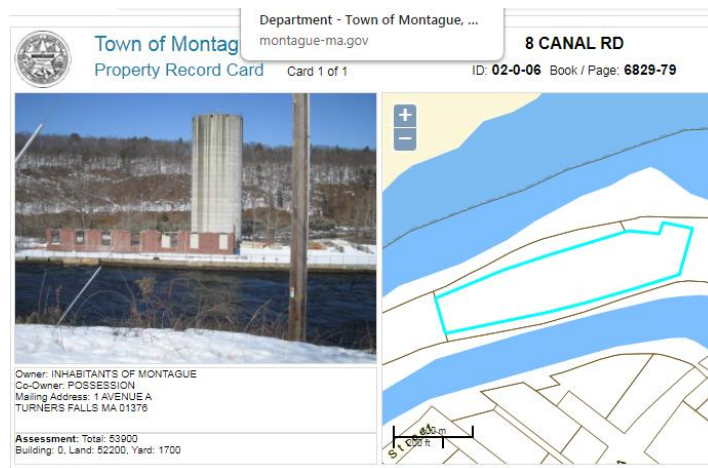
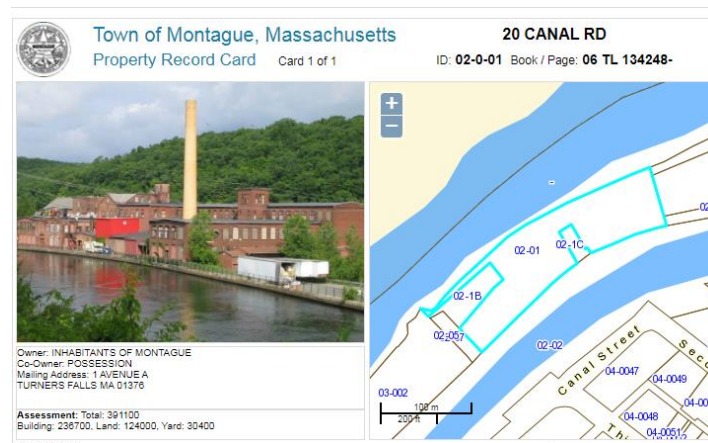
Private investors, US Environmental Protection Brownfield Program, MassWorks Infrastructure program, Mass DOT, FirstLight, Town of Montague, Department of Housing and Community Development-Community Development Block Grant

Historic-Industrial Area

Priority Land for Acquisition and Conveyance


20 and 8 Canal Road Strathmore Mill

The Montague EDIC will consider acquiring 20 Canal Road (Assessors Map 2 Lots 1 and 6) from the Town of Montague for the purposes of facilitating redevelopment of this key property in the Canal District of Turners Falls. Property is Zoned Historic-Industrial. The combine acreage of the two sites is 5 acres.



11 Power Street (Griswold Mill)

The Montague EDIC will consider acquiring 11 Power Street (Assessors Map 3 Lot 27) from the Town of Montague for the purposes of facilitating redevelopment of this key property in the Canal District of Turners Falls. Property is zoned Historic-Industrial.




Town of Montague, Massachusetts

Property Record Card

11 POWER ST

ID: 03-0-027 Book / Page: 6418-65

Card 1 of 1



Owner: SOLUTIONS CONSULTING GROUP LLC

Co-Owner:


Mailing Address: 28 SHERIDAN ST

CHICOPEE MA 01020

Assessment: Total: 159400

Building: 0, Land: 148300, Yard: 11100

Sales History





The Griswold Mill site was cleaned up in 2021 by the EPA

GREAT FALLS DISCOVERY CENTER AREA

The Montague EDIC was instrumental in developing the Great Falls Discovery Center and the Canalside Bike Path in the early 2000's. While the EDIC redeveloped and transferred portions of the area to the MA Department of Conservation and Recreation(DCR) in 2004, the EDIC has retained 4 parcels in this area. Parcels 04-40 and 04-44 are part of the Discovery Center grounds. The grounds are managed by the DCR, but the land is owned by the EDIC. The EDIC is committed to place a conservation restriction on this parcel to satisfy the needs of DCR. Map 4 lot 280 is a municipal parking lot that is managed by the Montague Department of public works but owned by the Montague EDIC. Map 4 Lot 41 is an EDIC held parcel that has been prioritized for infill development to support downtown's growth. The EDIC's priority is to convey this property for development into a commercial/ mixed-use- or cultural facility that fits architecturally with the Great Falls Discovery Center. Any development of the property must be in conformance with an amended "512" agreement between the Town, EDIC, and DCR.



Conceptual Master Plan (2013 Downtown Turners Falls Livability Plan)

Great Falls Discovery Center Area

Land to be conveyed for development

38 Avenue A – Assessors Map 4 Lot 41



- Prime Downtown Lot adjacent to Great Falls Discovery Center
- 0.35 acres
- Owned by Montague EDIC
- Zoned Central Business
- Can accommodate a multi-story commercial and or mixed-use or a community/institutional use.

FARREN CARE CENTER

Montague Zoning District: Central Business

Land Ownership: Trinity Health New England

The Farren Care Center is a 63,000 square foot hospital/ nursing home on 7.3 acres. The site is centrally located in the village of Montague City. The Farren Care Center was formerly the largest employer in Montague. It closed in 2021 and relocated all patients and employees to another site in Holyoke. The closure has significant impact on the local labor market. In November 2021, the current owner publicly indicated plans to demolish the structure and convey the property to the Town. The Farren is a beloved community institution built in 1925. Any re-use should have elements that honor the history of the property. This scenario presents the community and Montague EDIC with a unique opportunity for controlled economic and community development.

Project Goals:

- Redevelop the property in a manner that supports revitalization of the village center of Montague City
- Increase the supply of high quality commercial and workforce housing opportunities in Montague through a master planned development.

Action Items:

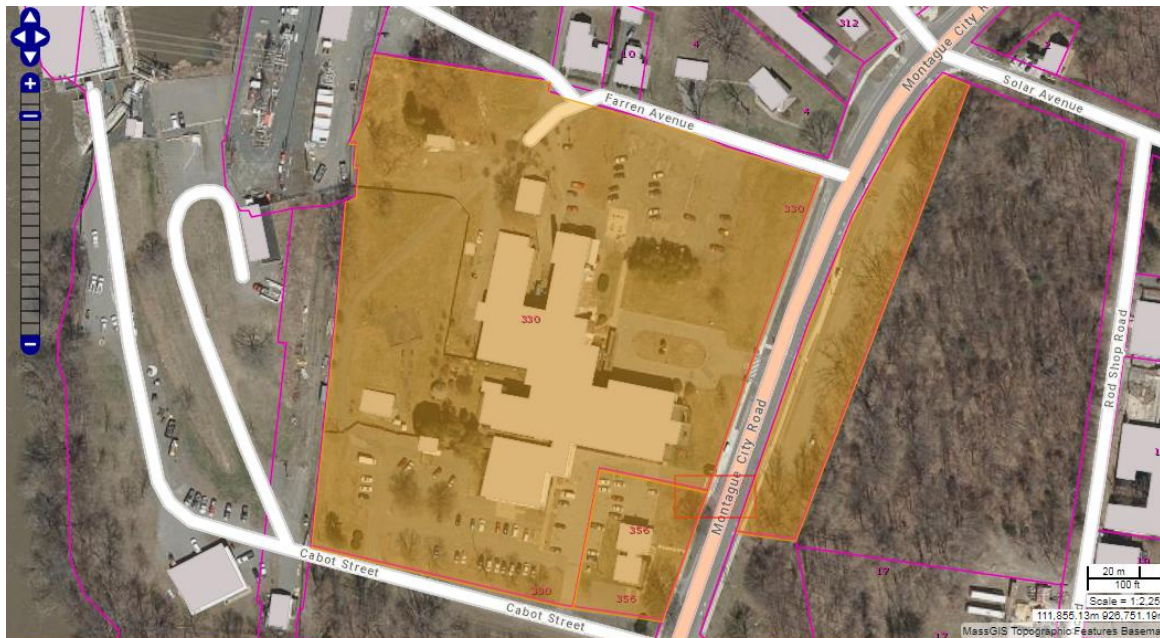
- Develop a community-supported re-use plan for the 7.3 acre property
- Facilitate transfer of property to a master developer with a community-supported vision for the property.

Financing:

MassDevelopment, Mass One Stop for Community Growth, municipal funds

Property Address: 330, 356 Montague City Road

Parcel ID: Map 12 Lots 44, 44A, and 51



Report of the Planning Board

TOWN MEETING ADOPTION

APPENDIX B:

MONTAGUE SOCIO-ECONOMIC SUMMARY

Credit: <https://www.neighborhoodscout.com/ma/montague>

Unlike some towns where white-collar or blue-collar occupations dominate the local economy, Montague is neither predominantly one nor the other. Instead, it has a mixed workforce of both white- and blue-collar jobs. Overall, Montague is a town of service providers, professionals, and sales and office workers. There are especially a lot of people living in Montague who work in office and administrative support (11.9%), management occupations (8.2%), and healthcare support services (7.4%).

Of important note, Montague is also a town of artists. Montague has more artists, designers and people working in media than 90% of the communities in America. This concentration of artists and creatives helps shape Montague's character.

Telecommuters are a relatively large percentage of the workforce: 7.7% of people work from home. While this number may seem small overall, as a fraction of the total workforce it is high relative to the nation. These workers are often telecommuters who work in knowledge-based, white-collar professions. For example, Silicon Valley has large numbers of people who telecommute. Other at-home workers may be self-employed people who operate small businesses out of their homes.

In terms of college education, Montague is somewhat better educated than the 21.8% who have a 4-year degree or higher in the typical US community: 27.2% of adults 25 and older in the town have at least a bachelor's degree.

The per capita income in Montague in 2018 was \$30,317, which is low income relative to Massachusetts, and upper middle income relative to the rest of the US. This equates to an annual income of \$121,268 for a family of four. However, Montague contains both very wealthy and poor people as well.

The people who call Montague home describe themselves as belonging to a variety of racial and ethnic groups. The greatest number of Montague residents report their race to be White, followed by Black or African-American. Important ancestries of people in Montague include Irish, English, French, Polish, and Italian.

The most common language spoken in Montague is English. Other important languages spoken here include Spanish and Russian.